BENGALURU, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2023 www.Bangaloremirror.com 12 Pages PRICE ₹3

Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 27 | Min 17 | Humidity 60% Partly Cloudy Sensex 70,506 | Nifty 21,150 | Gold 62,392 | Silver 74,731 | Dollar 83.19 | Euro 91.09 | GBP 105.25

Shoddy maintenance, encroachment at Indiranagar park have residents complaining about BBMP's horticulture dept

GARDEN STATE

'Saplings to be pruned, chopped by contractor'

| Y Maheswara Reddy
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The residents of Indiranagar 1st Stage are not happy with the poor condition of a park situated near the now defunct BDA shopping complex. The park is also known as the Double Road Park. The residents have been demanding the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) horticulture department maintain the park as it would benefit senior citizens who come to the park for walks.

They were also demanding the BBMP horticulture department direct the contractor to prune the overgrown saplings; but the contractor allegedly engaged an unskilled labourer for the job, we are told.

"The labourer has chopped the saplings instead of pruning them. I am shocked to see the chopped

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

"Recently, I came across a person riding a motorbike on the walking path... –Brigadier Mahadevan, resident

Flyover delayed

All hands not on deck; wait a year more

PAGE 3

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3 THINGS TO DO

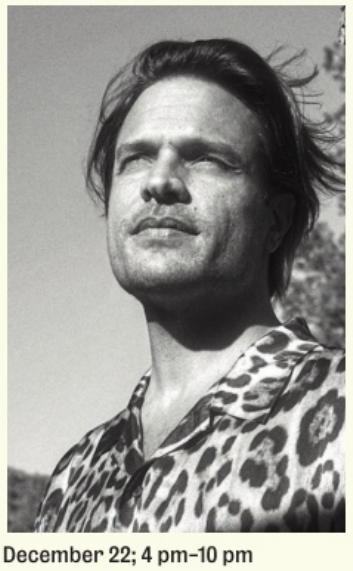
01 Yoga summit

Rotary Bangalore Global Yoga Club, in association with Swami Vivekananda Yoga Research and Holistic Health Trust & Yoga University, is organising the Global Yoga Summit (GYS) 2023. Over 40 national and international doctors, yoga gurus from across the world, vedic experts, academicians, and yoga enthusiasts will be participating in the GYS. The two-day interactive session of the summit will provide a global platform for all yoga aspirants. **Where: Palace Grounds; When: December 23 and 24**

02 Jazz strings

Waiting to spend your Friday amazingly? Don't miss the opportunity to attend an enchanting fusion of live jazz at one of the happening places in the city. The popular Chronic Blues Circus is all set to present their compositions and bring soulful live jazz music and covers with their talented musicians.
Where: The Drawing Room at Smoke House Deli, 1209, 100 Feet Road, HAL 2nd Stage, Indiranagar When: Friday, December 22; 8 pm onwards

03 High vibes



Attend a dazzling live performance by the globally renowned DJ Argy at Darkroom Festival 2023. This fest is all set to bring an immersive sensory experience, with an exclusive showcase by the DJ.
Where: BYG Brewski Brewing Company, Hennur; When: December 22; 4 pm–10 pm

A true hero in every drop

This resident from Mekhri Circle achieves significant milestone by contributing to 300 blood donations to date; he calls himself MAD donor, which means he 'makes a difference'

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In a very kind initiative and feat of compassion and altruism, 59-year-old Chandrakantha KV, an engineer from Bengaluru and a resident of Mekhri Circle, has made a triple century by making 300 blood donations. His incredible journey began at the age of 21 during a college blood donation campaign, marking the start of a lifelong commitment to saving lives.

"I never knew I would go a long way for blood donation. In 1986, during my college days, I made my first donation, and from there, it became an annual tradition," said Chandrakantha. The turning point came in 1998 when he connected with Alphonse Kurian and the Lions Club Blood Line, accelerating his mission to make a difference.

Over the years, Chandrakantha's donations took a significant turn in 2015, when he played a pivotal role in a stem cell donation for a 6-year-old girl suffering from blood cancer in Secunderabad.

"I was transferred to Yeddumailaram in Hyderabad, and the process took two years. The stem cell donation helped cure the cancer, proving the impact we can have through blood donation," he said.

He highlighted another case where a Pakistani kid who came for treatment in Bengaluru for a bone marrow transplant post-covid in an emergency needed blood. He needed a single donor platelet (SDP), and through his donation, the treatment turned out to be successful.

Chandrakantha emphasised the scarcity of blood donors, stating, "Less than 1% donate blood in the country, but whenever there was a requirement, I donated without hesitation. We can donate blood once every three months, and we can even do the SDP donation once every two weeks. I call myself a MAD donor, which means I make a difference. And I believe in doing good and making a difference in people's lives. If more people embrace blood donation, we can save countless lives together."

So far, he has donated 235 times SDP, 60 times whole blood donations, 4 times granulocyte donation, and one time carried out the stem cell donation.

SDP blood donations are helpful for cancer patients, patients with blood disorders, patients with immune disorders, patients with low platelets, trauma or accident victims, and many others.

Speaking about how he manages to carry out donations so frequently or in emergencies, he said, "Whenever I go for a blood donation, I take leave from work and I make sure I finish the blood donation. Regular blood donation improves heart rate, and it's a simple way for anyone to contribute to the well-being of others. It can also lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels, boost the production of RBCs, and replenish the blood."

His dedication inspired family members to join the cause. "My brother, a scientist, has donated 18 times, my nephew 12 times, and even my wife recently contributed. My family has been totally supportive," he shared proudly.

Lastly, he stated that he has another six years of time to carry out blood donation and that he will make the most of it. Chandrakantha's story exemplifies the power of individual commitment to making a positive impact on society, one blood donation at a time.

Chandrakantha KV, 59, began his incredible journey of blood donation at the age of 21 during a college blood donation campaign

> **"I never knew I would go a long way for blood donation. In 1986, during my college days, I made my first donation**
> – Chandrakantha KV, an engineer

Where wisdom meets nostalgia

The students and teachers of Bangalore's New Horizon English School in Indiranagar gathered together to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of the passing out of the students of its 1999 batch over the weekend. It's not often you see a bunch of students taking the time and effort to reach out to their school teachers and bring them together to relive their school days.

More than 30 teachers, most of them in their late 60's and 70's, attended the reunion in full strength, along with more than 40 students from the class of '99.

The gathering was presided over by their then-principal, Vatsala Rajamani, along with all the other teachers. It is understood that the class of '99 that used to bring laurels to school across fields of academics, sports, dance, etc. continues to excel, with some of its students being part of the Chandrayaan Mission; some of them have gone on to become notable stars in Bollywood and beyond; some notable entrepreneurs; and many other fields.

The event was also virtually attended by their batchmates who live in other countries through a live streaming setup.

It is notable that the event was independently organised by the students of the Class of '99, which was also attended by the school's alumni coordinator, Vasanthi. Coincidentally, the school has an alumni meeting planned for January, and it is expected that the reunion of the class of '99 will inspire more students to join the event organised by the school. Teachers and students were felicitated with memorabilia, with all participants going through nostalgic moments with great joy and overwhelming emotions.

Students from the school interested in attending the alumni meet can write their interests to Alumni Coordinator Vasanthi at hr.nhps@newhorizonindia.edu.

— BMB

More than 30 teachers attended the reunion in full strength along with students from the class of 1999

All hands not on deck, wait for flyover just 1 year more

BBMP attributes further delay in Yelahanka flyover work to shortage of hands; citizens want knotted traffic situation to end

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The launch of the 1.8-km-long Yelahanka flyover, expected to decongest the Yelahanka police station junction, has been delayed yet again. The four-lane project is now likely to be completed only by December 2024.

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) officials attribute the delay to a shortage of manpower. According to BS Prahlad, Chief Engineer of BBMP's Road Infrastructure Department, while nearly 60% of the work on site is over, wrapping up the project will require at least one more year.

"Majority of the piers are up and we will soon be launching girders. About 60% of the work is completed and we plan to finish the project by December 31, 2024. Bengaluru is witnessing a steep surge in development activities and thus there is not only a shortage of raw materials but manpower as well. We have not been getting the required manpower and thus the pace has slowed down. This shortage is expected to remain till July, once the monsoon begins. The city is undergoing an infrastructure boom and all projects are facing these issues," said Prahlad.

With this new target date, the much-awaited flyover has overshot its original deadline by nearly 1.5 years. Work on the project was started in January 2022, and the detailed project report by the civic agency then suggested that it would be completed in 18 months (by July 2023). BBMP, at the beginning of the project, had also announced that it would be finishing the construction ahead of its original deadline.

However, after it missed the first deadline, authorities set January 1, 2024, as the inauguration day, which was later pushed to March 31, 2024.

Traffic snarls common

The long delay in project has irked residents and commuters in the area. Commuters say traffic snarls have become a common sight even during non-peak traffic hours.

"The work has slowed down over the past few months. The traffic scenario on the stretch between Yelahanka traffic police station and Rail Wheel Factory has been deteriorating since the project began nearly two years ago. BBMP has put up a lot of barricades along the construction site, blocking traffic flow at many places. The project has turned the commute on the stretch into a nightmare. The situation worsens over the weekend or during peak hours and queues of vehicles stretch up to the Rail Wheel Factory's main gate," said V Selvarajan, a regular commuter.

Those commuting to and from Doddaballapur Main Road say that covering a distance of less than one km, between Rail Wheel Factory and Yelahanka Police Station, now takes nearly 30 minutes in peak traffic.

> **"Majority of the piers are up and we will soon be launching girders. About 60% of the work is completed and we plan to finish the project by December 31, 2024**
>
> –BS Prahlad, BBMP

"I live on Doddaballapur Main Road and my office is located in Marathahalli. The daily commute to the office has become a nightmare since the construction began.

The pace at which the work is moving reminds me of Stonehenge in the UK. Not even all pillars are in place so far. If the project had to take this long, work should have happened in parts instead of blocking the whole 1.8-km stretch in one go. Decision makers are allotting Rs 50,000 crore for a tunnel road when many ongoing projects are moving at a snail's pace, impacting the quality of life of citizens," said Vidyasagar Arya, a resident of the area.

The flyover is expected to give vehicle users signal-free passage as it would seamlessly link four traffic junctions: Yelahanka police station, NES Circle, Seshadripuram First Grade College junction, and Sandeep Unnikrishnan Circle.

Man conceals 2 kg cocaine in stomach, caught

Officials at Kempegowda International Airport confiscated cocaine valued at Rs 20 crore from a Nigerian traveller who had concealed 2 kg of the drug in 99 capsules inside his stomach. The individual, who arrived from Addis Ababa, underwent a five-day hospital stay for extraction of the contraband. This incident, considered the largest cocaine seizure at the airport, occurred on December 11, with the suspect facing charges under the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. According to the sources, the accused had entered India on a medical treatment visa, as per reports. He was arrested by The Directorate Revenue Intelligence (DRI) officials. **BMB**

Bizman house theft: 8 nabbed

Eight individuals have been apprehended by the police in connection with a robbery that occurred 15 days ago in HMT Layout. The suspects, disguised in police uniforms, had stolen Rs 60 lakh in cash and 700 grams of gold from the residence of Manohar, the owner of SNR Poly Films.

His wife and son permitted the entry, assuming it was related to a police inquiry due to the family's troubled relationships. However, the situation escalated when the assailants revealed their true intentions, brandishing weapons to threaten the family.

After looting Rs 60 lakh and jewellery worth Rs 42 lakh, they fled, taking precautions by stealing the CCTV's digital video recorder. The injured son was hospitalised, and a complaint was filed by Manohar. The police have successfully arrested eight suspects from various locations, currently interrogating them to recover the stolen items. **BMB**

Cat parent accuses police of laxity even after pet's abduction is caught on CCTV

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The incidents of cats going missing and stolen are increasing in the city. A few months ago, a Persian cat was stolen from Koramangala 8th Block.

The latest incident of a cat being stolen took place at HSR 2nd Sector last month. The complainant has been visiting the jurisdictional police station since November 25 requesting the police to help her find the cat.

HSR Police have registered a first information report (FIR) under the Section 379 (Punishment for theft) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) 1860 based on a complaint lodged by Aparna Yogesh Ashtekar, a homemaker.

According to the FIR, Ashtekar has seven cats and one of the cats named Marshal went missing on November 19. It is said that she searched for Marshal in and around the apartment complex where she lives. The FIR states that the CCTV footage has caught three people taking the cat (Marshal) in a bag.

"Marshal was rescued a year ago from the road nearby. It was found abandoned on the street as its parents had vacated the house. I brought it to my home. It has the habit of going out for half-an-hour every day. I did not notice Marshal going out as I was busy with some work. Later I couldn't find it. I searched for it at nearby apartments but could not find it," said Aparna.

She said the police are yet to verify the CCTV footage provided by her to them. "I want the police to verify the CCTV footage to nab the thieves and restore Marshal to me. The police keep telling me that they are looking into the case whenever I approach them," she said.

Expressing concern over the apathy of the police, Arun Prasad, an animal activist, said that the police become apathetic in most of the cases or complaints related to animals. "It is the responsibility of the authorities to prevent cruelty against animals," he said.

A similar incident had taken place at Cox Town in April. Bangalore Mirror had written about the frequent instances of people stealing pet cats in the area at the time.

> **Arun Prasad, an animal activist, said that the police become apathetic in most of the cases or complaints related to animals**

Call for assistance in civic infrastructure

State pitches to Centre to seek financial help for tunnel road, metro expansion, and flood mitigation

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Despite facing resistance from some sectors of society, the state government remains steadfast in its decision to proceed with the tunnel road. Given the estimated project cost exceeding Rs 30,000 crore, the state government has reached out to the Centre for support.

On Wednesday, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar appealed to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, stating, "Bengaluru is one of the most traffic-congested cities globally, impacting the mobility, productivity, and environment of the city." He presented a proposal for the construction of a 60-kilometre urban tunnel, aiming to establish east-west and north-south corridors within the city, linking major arterial roads, and circumventing surface traffic. The project's approximate cost is Rs 30,000 crore, at Rs 500 crore per km.

Highlighting the advantages over integrated flyovers, which often face opposition due to their massive structures, tree/green cover removal, traffic diversion challenges, and land acquisition issues, he stressed the underground nature of the urban tunnel. "This approach saves surface space, maintains aesthetics, reduces noise and air pollution, and minimises disruption and displacement. Given the connection of NH7 and NH4 in the planned project, the Government of Karnataka, in collaboration with NHAI, can undertake it, and funds should be allocated to both from the central budget," he said.

The state government has proposed a 190-km tunnel covering key areas such as Bellary Road, Old Madras Road, ST Mall Junction to Mehkri Circle, Miller Road, Chalukya Circle, Trinity Circle, Sarjapur Road, Hosur, Kanakapura Road to Krishna Rao Park, Mysore Road to Sirsi Circle, Magadi Road, Tumkur Road to Yeshwanthpur Junction, and Outer Ring Road Gurgunte Palya, among others. A feasibility report is planned to determine crucial aspects such as whether the tunnel road should be four-lane or six-lane, its starting and ending points, and the overall expansion plan for Bengaluru.

The Deputy CM said that Bengaluru is one of the most traffic-congested cities globally

> **The proposal, seeking financial assistance for various interventions totaling Rs 3,000 crore, has been submitted to the World Bank**
>
> –DK Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister, Karnataka

Support sought for metro expansion

In the meantime, DKS also conveyed that the Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL), established as a dedicated entity for constructing metro corridors in Bengaluru, has played a role in various phases of metro construction. Phase 1 comprises 42.3 km with 40 stations, fully operational; Phase 2 spans 75.05 km with 62 stations, partially operational. Additionally, Phase 2A and Phase 2B (ORR-Airport Metro) cover 58.19 km and are currently under construction. Phase 3, totaling 44.65 km, has been submitted to the Union Government for approval, while Phase 3A, covering 37 km, is in the final stage of the DPR.

Acknowledging Bengaluru's rapid expansion in all directions, he identified five corridors as extensions to existing metro lines, totaling 129 km. "These corridors aim to connect peripheral areas and satellite towns, addressing the growing demand for public transport," DKS said, appealing for supportive approvals from the Government of India.

Mitigating 'urban' floods

Seeking assistance from the Centre to mitigate Bengaluru's floods, DKS highlighted the city's exposure to 'high intensity low duration' rainfalls in the rainy season due to climate change, leading to flash floods. Additionally, the lakes, essential in flood prevention, face inefficiencies caused by the significant sewage flow in stormwater drains, resulting in the silting up of tanks. DKS said, "The proposal, seeking financial aid for interventions totaling Rs 3,000 crore, has been submitted to the World Bank. Currently, the proposal is with the Department of Economic Affairs, awaiting approval."

Sustainable lifestyle is just call away

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In order to help citizens know more about waste management and sustainable alternatives, an Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) has been launched in the city for citizens to learn more about ways to live a sustainable lifestyle. This initiative is one of a kind and was started in Bengaluru. In the beginning, it will be taken up as a pilot project from December to February to check on how the citizens make use of the free query-answer service.

The Mitigation Action Facility and GIZ India, which supported Circular Waste Solutions in association with implementation partner Saahas, launched a free number to address solid waste management queries from citizens of Bengaluru on Wednesday.

The IVRS has a voicemail feature where one can drop in queries

Citizens can call the hotline number and have their questions answered on the importance of segregating waste at the source, ways to compost at home and its benefits, advantages of switching to sustainable menstruation options and how to do it, alternatives to single-use plastic, as well as its ill-effects.

The service would also provide information on sustainable menstruation products, cutlery banks, and swap shops, and apprise them on how to conduct zero-waste and eco-friendly events.

The number is said to be active for citizens from Monday to Friday, 9:30 am to 5 pm, and on Saturdays, 9:30 am to 4 pm.

To utilise the service, one can call +91 9353902092, following which an IVR language with options for English and Kannada will take them through a series of topics to have their queries addressed.

Upon selecting the preferred option, the IVRS will guide them to a call representative who will hear out their questions and provide suitable solutions. Further, the agents would also provide callers with informational videos and articles for those who would be interested in learning more about any particular topic. The IVRS has a voicemail feature where citizens can drop in their queries and get them answered over a call.

Veerendra from Saahas said, "People can call the number and get the queries addressed. The number also has a WhatsApp facility where they can post questions and get their queries answered. There are experts who will be answering the questions from Bengaluru." The Waste Solutions for a Circular Economy in India, also referred to as 'Circular Waste Solutions', is a NAMA Facility-supported project aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the waste sector. The project is working in alignment with the objectives of Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0.

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Broken slabs
Old Madras Road

Drain slabs have been broken at the bus stand on Old Madras Road, near Vivekananda Metro Station, for the past few months. This poses a severe safety hazard.

No smooth road
MSR Nagar

There is a pothole on 80 Feet Road, located opposite MS Ramaiah Hospital. The authorities concerned should repair it as soon as possible.

Unclean sight
Hospital Road

The road leading to the hospital is filthy. Bengaluru's oldest road has deteriorated and is heavily polluted.

Help catch violators, but keep 'revenge' out of this

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Bengaluru South Traffic Police's new initiative 'Be Our Eyes on the Road' campaign that kicked off on December 19 with an aim to tackle reckless driving and road rage, is creating quite a buzz. Though this unique initiative harnesses social media and citizen engagement to enhance road safety in the city, in the past the buzz has not been all that positive.

DCP South Traffic, Shiva Prakash Devaraju, told BM that in just one day of launching the initiative he has started to get posts regarding the violations and added that the police are expecting that this social media campaign will help them catch heavy vehicles that are violating the traffic rules.

"We are in parallel doing drives on junctions and pelican signals and we want that social media can be used as a tool specially for us to catch heavy vehicles violating rules," he told BM.

BM also asked the police officials what the procedure to slap a fine on the violators is, as in the past there have been cases where people would post fake violation pictures to seek "revenge".

The traffic police told us that challans would only be issued after investigation. "If it is found that the picture or information is wrong, we will not book a case, the onus of investigation is on the police," said the police.

The DCP also highlighted that managing road safety amidst increasing traffic in Bengaluru is an ongoing challenge for the traffic police.

Police said they would first probe to see if the picture or information is of a genuine complaint and only then book a case

"The campaign encourages citizens to actively contribute, making them integral partners in our efforts. By urging them to report violations on social media with #DCPSOUTHLISTENS, we aim to foster a more vigilant and responsible driving culture," he said.

The campaign prompts citizens to capture video evidence of traffic violations such as speeding and drunk driving, sharing them on Twitter. The hashtag facilitates direct monitoring by the traffic police, ensuring appropriate action against offenders.

This initiative signifies a noteworthy shift in Bengaluru's traffic management approach, earning acclaim from both citizens and traffic safety experts.

What a wonderful world it could be

Residents' association shows the way to reclaim public spaces, to cut carbon emissions to minimum

Citizens are giving more importance to cycling and trying to get more to join the pedal brigade

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A residents' association in the city is doing all it can to keep emissions minimal in their neighbourhood. The HBR Resident welfare association (RWA) are helping residents to adapt to cycling. Collaborating with the Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT), they carried out three cycle rallies from October till December and now are running three campaigns targeting slow streets, reclaiming public spaces and pedal shaale in HBR layout.

Every third week of Sunday in October, November and December, the residents in partnership with DULT carried out the cycle day rally. Over 250 cyclists used to participate in the event. The cyclists would cycle around all the five blocks in HBR Layout covering an area of 5 km. The HBR RWA reached out to schools and colleges to interact with the students and many students joined the cycle day events held on October 15, November 19 and December 17.

Following the rallies, the RWA is now looking at carrying out three campaigns, one of which is to identify slow streets.

Prasanna Kumar, Secretary of HBR RWA said, "We want to identify slow streets that vehicles should move at a speed of less than 15 km/hr in these areas. In the beginning of the campaign, we identified three streets. One is the JSS Public School Road which is a 800 metre road and on the same line there are three other schools."

He said that on these roads, a lot of people do wheeling activities and haphazard parking. "We want the street to have elevated humps and sign display zones and cops to be deputed in the morning and evening hours. This will ensure safety for the school children and even avoid any traffic violating activities. The area around the school should also have no-honking no-speeding rules. Similarly we have identified the Ganapathy Temple Road where there are a lot of hospitals and clinics and another is the BDA Complex to Indira Canteen Road, where many people visit the complex and there is movement of vehicles at high speed. Another road identified by us is a residential layout but people are carrying out wheelies. This needs to be stopped by putting out big display signage boards," Kumar said.

"We will do a survey on parks and other spaces on the problems faced by the residents and reclaim the spots

–Prasanna Kumar, RWA

This apart, the next initiative they are working on is reclaiming public spaces. For instance if a park has not been used for a while, they will identify the problems as to why it is not being used. According to the residents, in the HBR Layout vicinity, two parks are taken over by lorry drivers where the lorries are parked and the drivers go to sleep, due to which residents are not able to use them. "We will do a survey on different parks and other public spaces on the problems faced by the residents and reclaim the spots. The idea is to give the public spaces back to the public," added Kumar.

Pedal shaale is another initiative where some of the cyclists will be trained to train non cyclists or anyone who is interested in learning the skill.

Kumar added, "We have initiated the campaign and want to finish it as quickly as possible. We want more residents to come forward to carry out surveys along with us and this way each one can be the change. The survey will then be submitted to DULT and traffic police to help find solutions."

IN BRIEF

Woman, bit by snake, dies after glucose drip

A shocking incident of alleged medical negligence resulting in the death of a woman snake bite victim was reported from Tumakuru district on Wednesday.

The deceased woman was identified as Parvathamma, 45, a resident of Mutyalammanahalli in Madhugiri taluk.

Bitten by a snake while working at a farm, she was immediately taken to Kodigehalli government hospital.

The duty doctor, after examining the victim, had allegedly administered glucose to her and sent her back home.

After this, Parvathamma stabilised and spoke to her family members. All family members had dinner together and went to sleep.

Around midnight, Parvathamma turned serious and the family took her to Tumakuru district hospital where she succumbed. Kodigehalli police are looking into the case. IANS

Woman arrested for throwing her child in river

A woman has been arrested in Ramanagara for throwing her toddler into a river, police said. The accused has been identified as 21-year-old Bhagyamma, a resident of Banagalli village near Channapatna town.

According to the police, Bhagyamma had left her husband and was living at her parents' residence with her son, Devaraj (1.3 years). According to the police, she started a relationship to which her mother had objected.

Bhagyamma's mother also criticised her for leaving her child and going out with her partner. The police said her partner did not like her son. On Tuesday night on the pretext of washing clothes, she took her child near the Kanva River. IANS

State swiftly gets back to testing tactic

2 covid fatalities in Bengaluru; officials reiterate there is no need to panic, all is in control

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In the midst of growing concerns about a potential surge in covid-19 cases, two fatalities related to the illness have been reported in Wednesday's health bulletin. Out of the two, a 64-year-old resident of Chamarajpet, passed away five days ago due to aspiration pneumonia (admitted to hospital on September 12 and died on December 17), while the second patient was a 44-year old who was asymptomatic but admitted to hospital on November 23 due to Ischemic heart disease and died due to multiple organ failure on December 16.

Meanwhile, Karnataka reported 22 covid infections including 19 in Bengaluru with a test positivity rate of 5.09%. Overall, 20 patients are in various hospitals of the state including seven in ICU.

This development raises questions about the potential involvement of the new subvariant JN.1 of the SARS CoV-2 virus.

Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said that both the deceased were grappling with various comorbidities, including heart failure, TB infection, hypertension, lung disease, bronchial asthma, covid-19, and pneumonia and there was still no proof whether the deaths were due to JN.1.

Rao said, "To address the situation, the state government is intensifying its testing efforts. The goal is to ramp up testing capacity to 5,000 tests per day within the next three days. Furthermore, RT-PCR tests have been made mandatory for severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) cases and at least 1 in 20 influenza-like illness (ILI) cases."

Upcoming discussions and measures

A meeting is scheduled with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to discuss additional measures and preparations in light of this development. The state government is stressing the significance of extensive testing and genome sequencing to comprehend the spread of the infection. "Despite concerns, we assured the public that there is currently no need for worry. The mandatory use of masks for health workers remains in place," Rao said. He added that Karnataka has sought cooperation from the Centre to reduce the cost of annual maintenance for PM CARE ventilators and restore the functionality of the ICMR portal. "The state government continues to monitor the situation closely and has not yet determined quarantine rules or protocols. If the severity of infection and hospitalisation increases, the state will explore appropriate measures in response to the evolving circumstances," Rao said.

Medical staff of Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Chest Diseases arrange beds at a covid ward, in Bengaluru, on Tuesday; People wearing face masks as a precautionary measure after cases of covid-19 subvariant JN.1 were detected in the country, in Bengaluru, on Wednesday

Masks and testing protocols reinstated in schools

In response to the surge in Covid-19 cases, several schools have reintroduced safety measures to protect students and staff. Temperature checks are now a common practice at school entrances, with school associations prioritising the health and well-being of students. Students are required to undergo a thermometer test upon arrival, and those displaying symptoms are advised to stay home and refrain from attending classes. Furthermore, schools are strongly recommending the use of masks to minimise the risk of transmission within the educational environment. These precautionary measures aim to create a secure learning environment and curb the potential spread of the virus among students and staff.

> **The state government is intensifying testing efforts. The goal is to ramp up testing capacity to 5,000 tests per day within the next three days**
>
> –Dinesh Gundu Rao, Health Minister

No New Year Curbs in Bengaluru

Addressing concerns regarding potential restrictions for New Year's eve, BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath clarified that there are no specific curbs for New Year's eve programs in Bengaluru City. He emphasised that curbs can only be imposed based on guidelines from the State or Centre. Currently, only advisory measures have been received, and there are no plans to enforce any restrictions.

Regarding New Year's eve programs, the police will determine traffic restrictions and issue separate guidelines. Additionally, the police will manage law and order, including the installation of cameras. Adding to this, Rao said, "There is no restriction on New Year celebrations and gatherings as of now, but wearing masks is always good for everyone, especially at crowded places."

Quick updates

Covid surge in 5 states including Karnataka

On Wednesday, Union Health Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya conducted a high-level meeting to address the escalating Covid-19 cases in five states: Kerala, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, and Karnataka. Stressing the need for preparedness without room for politics, Dr. Mandaviya called for increased surveillance, effective communication, and regular mock drills in hospitals every three months. He assured the Centre's support and stressed the importance of compliance with operational guidelines. In a letter, Union Health Secretary Sudhansh Pant highlighted the emergence of the JN.1 variant, a descendant of the BA.2.86 lineage, expressing concerns about its potential for immune evasion. Despite uncertainties regarding symptom variations, existing treatments and updated vaccines are expected to remain effective against JN.1.

'Don't Panic'

On Wednesday, NITI Aayog member Dr. VK Paul urged the public not to succumb to panic regarding the new covid-19 variant JN.1. He assured that the Centre is actively implementing necessary measures to address the new variant. Dr. VK Paul stressed that the new variant does not lead to severe illness, and the reported 16 deaths in the last week were individuals with significant comorbidities. Highlighting the ongoing presence of COVID-19, he advised citizens to remain vigilant. The government, he added, is diligently engaged in sequencing and surveillance efforts to stay prepared. Dr. VK Paul stated that the Centre has urged all states to increase testing and raise awareness about protocols, reassuring the public that vaccination coverage provides a level of protection, mitigating the need for panic.

JN.1 is still a 'variant of interest'

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has categorised the COVID-19 strain JN.1 as a distinct "variant of interest" due to its rapid spread, although it emphasizes a "low" global public health risk. Initially part of the BA.2.86 sublineages, which were classified as a variant of interest (VOI), JN.1 has seen a significant surge in prevalence globally, including India's first reported case. The WHO now recognises JN.1 as a separate VOI from the parent lineage BA.2.86, acknowledging its predominant presence among reported descendent lineages. While the global health body assesses the additional risk as "low" based on limited evidence, it cautions about potential increases in SARS-CoV-2 cases, particularly in countries entering the winter season. JN.1 has been identified in various countries, including the USA, China, Singapore, and India, with a notable impact on case numbers reported in some regions.

HEALTH TIP: Radish is a great source of fibre which helps prevent constipation and keeps your stool soft

Pistachio is a good source of phosphorus, which keeps the bones healthy, warding off osteoporosis and arthritis

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CUE TO EAT

Neuroscientist explains how to listen to your hunger during the holidays

The holiday season is upon us, and with it, opportunities to indulge in festive treats. The proverbial saying "you eat with your eyes first" seems particularly relevant at this time of year.

The science behind eating behaviour, however, reveals that the process of deciding what, when and how much to eat is far more complex than just consuming calories when your body needs fuel. Hunger cues are only part of why people choose to eat. As a scientist interested in the psychology and biology that drives eating behavior, I'm fascinated with how the brain's experiences with food shape eating decisions.

So how do people decide when to eat?

Eating with your eyes

Food-related visual cues can shape feeding behaviors in both people and animals. For example, wrapping food in McDonald's packaging is sufficient to enhance taste preferences across a range of foods – from chicken nuggets to carrots – in young children. Visual food-related cues, such as presenting a light when food is delivered, can also promote overeating behaviors in animals by overriding energy needs.

In fact, a whole host of sensory stimuli – noises, smells and textures – can be associated with the pleasurable consequences of eating and influence food-related decisions. This is why hearing a catchy radio jingle for a food brand, seeing a television ad for a restaurant or walking by your favorite eatery can shape your decision to consume and sometimes overindulge.

However, your capacity to learn about food-related cues extends beyond just stimuli from the outside world and includes the internal milieu of your body. In other words, you also tend to eat with your stomach in mind, and you do so by using the same learning and brain mechanisms involved in processing food-related stimuli from the outside world. These internal signals, also called interoceptive cues, include feelings of hunger and fullness emanating from your gastrointestinal tract.

It's no surprise that the signals from your gut help set the stage for when to eat, but the role these signals play is more profound than you might expect.

Trust your gut

Feelings of hunger or fullness act as important interoceptive cues influencing your decision-making around food.

To examine how interoceptive states shape eating behaviors, researchers trained laboratory rats to associate feelings of hunger or satiety with whether they receive food or not. They did this by giving rats food only when they were hungry or full, such that the rats were forced to recognize those internal cues to calculate whether food would be available or not. If a rat is trained to expect food only when hungry, it would generally avoid the area where food is available when it feels full because it does not expect to be fed.

However, when rats were injected with a hormone that triggers hunger called ghrelin, they approached the food delivery location more frequently. This suggests that the rats used this artificial state of hunger as an interoceptive cue to predict food delivery and subsequently behaved like they expected food.

Interoceptive states are sufficient to shape feeding behaviors even in the absence of external sensory cues. One particularly striking example comes from mice that have been genetically engineered to be unable to taste food but nevertheless show preferences for specific foods solely by caloric content. In other words, rodents can use internal cues to shape their food-related decision-making, including when and where to eat and which foods they prefer.

> **You also tend to eat with your stomach in mind, using the same learning and brain mechanisms involved in processing food-related stimuli from outside world**

These findings also suggest that feelings of hunger and the detection of nutrients is not restricted to the stomach. They also involve areas of the brain important for regulation and homeostasis, such as the lateral hypothalamus, as well as centers of the brain involved in learning and memory, such as the hippocampus.

What happens in vagus

The gut-brain axis, or the biochemical connection between your gut and your brain, shapes feeding behaviors in many ways. One of them involves the vagus nerve, a cranial nerve that helps control the digestive tract, among other things.

The vagus nerve rapidly communicates nutrient information to the brain. Activating the vagus nerve can induce a pleasurable state, such that mice will voluntarily perform a behavior, such as poking their nose through an open port, to stimulate their vagus nerve. Importantly, mice also learn to prefer foods and places where vagal nerve stimulation occurred.

The vagus nerve plays an essential role in not only communicating digestive signals but also an array of other interoceptive signals that can affect how you feel and behave. In people, vagal nerve stimulation can improve learning and memory and can be used to treat major depression.

Benefits of interoceptive awareness

Your body's capacity to use both external and internal cues to regulate how you learn and make decisions about food highlights the impressive processes involved in how you regulate your energy needs.

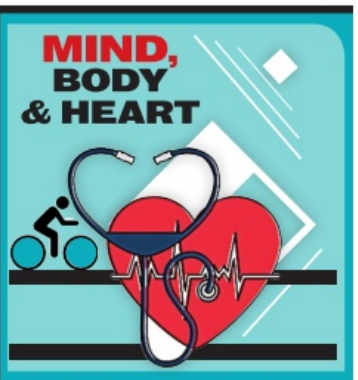
Poor interoceptive awareness is associated with a range of dysfunctional feeding behaviors, such as eating disorders. For instance, anorexia may result when interoceptive signals, such as feelings of hunger, are unable to trigger the motivation to eat. Alternatively, the inability to use the feeling of fullness to dampen the rewarding and pleasurable consequences of eating palatable food could result in binge eating.

Your interoceptive signals play an important role in regulating your daily eating patterns. During the holidays, many stressors from the outside world surround eating, such as packed social calendars, pressures to conform and feelings of guilt when overindulging.

At this time, it is particularly important to cultivate a strong connection to your interoceptive signals. This can help promote intuitive eating and a more holistic approach to your dietary habits. Rather than fixating on external factors and placing conditions on your eating behavior, enjoy the moment, deliberately savor each bite and provide time for your interoceptive signals to function in the role they are designed to play.

Your brain evolved to sense your current energy needs. By integrating these signals with your experience of your food environment, you can both optimize your energetic needs and enjoy the season.

Alex Johnson, Michigan State University, The Conversation



All you need to know about...

Indoor air quality

Boost to creativity
Good indoor air quality is not only beneficial for your lungs but will also boost your creativity levels, according to a study.

Long-term effect
Scientists at Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore have found that high levels of volatile organic compounds -- gases from common indoor products such as detergents, pesticides, perfumes, aerosol sprays and paint -- may affect your creativity at work affects people's creativity.

Volatile compounds
Using a statistical analysis, the team estimated that reducing total volatile organic compounds (TVOC) by 72% could improve a student's creative potential by 12 per cent. TVOC is an indicator that refers to the volume of volatile organic compounds in the air. Indoor VOCs are emitted from interior decoration sources such as paints and carpets and household products such as detergents and air fresheners.

Importance of air quality
The findings shed light on the importance of indoor air quality on our creative cognition, said the research team led by Assistant Professor Ng Bing Feng and Associate Professor Wan Man Pun, Cluster Directors for Smart and Sustainable Building Technologies at the NTU's Energy Research Institute.

Impact on mind
"While most people would correctly associate indoor air quality with effects on the lungs, our study shows that it could also have an impact on the mind and creative cognition, or the ability to use knowledge in an unconventional way. Our findings suggest that low TVOC levels, even well within the accepted threshold, could impact an individual's creative potential," Ng said.

—IANS

Indiranagar park needs proper maintenance

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

saplings in the park. It seems the labourer does not know the difference between chopping and pruning," said Sneha Nandihal, a resident.

Coming down heavily on the BBMP horticulture department for poor maintenance of the park, Swarna Venkataraman, a resident, said she is not happy with the civic body's work at the park.

"Overgrown weeds were a nuisance all these days. The condition of the footpaths along the compound of the park is far from satisfactory," said Venkataraman.

Expressing a similar opinion, Brigadier Mahadevan, another resident of the area, said he visits the park once in a week during the morning for walks.

"Earlier I used to visit the park twice a day but now only once a week. Recently I visited the park. The condition of the park was appalling. I want the BBMP to focus on the maintenance of the park. Recently, I came across a person riding a motorbike on the walking path inside the park. I told him that the park is not meant for riding a bike," said Mahadevan.

Expressing concern over the poor condition of the park, Dr Madhuri Salgar said she has been residing at Indiranagar 1st Stage for more than 15 years. "I am not happy with the maintenance of the park. The authorities have to take measures to prune overgrown saplings on a regular basis. There is a lot of garbage inside the park," said Salgar.

When contacted, Chandrasekhar Gowda, the contractor, said he did engage a skilled labourer to prune the saplings.

Meanwhile, BBMP superintendent (horticulture) Sudheendra Kumar said measures were being taken for the maintenance of the park.

"Earlier, there was no water facility at the park. CV Raman Nagar MLA S Raghu made arrangements to sink a borewell at the park last February. Now, there is water supply. We have floated a tender inviting bidders for the maintenance of parks. We will fix all the problems raised by the residents," said Kumar.

On the encroachment of the footpath in front of one of the gates of the park, Kumar said he has already informed the ward engineer to clear the encroachment by an eatery.

"We do not have the space to store dry leaves. So, we are using the vacant space near the gate for storing dry leaves," he said.

Saplings chopped along the fence of the park

RCB's buys

Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) made strategic acquisitions to successfully achieve optimal team balance at the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 Auction in Dubai on Tuesday.

As RCB executed well-thought-out six bids to shape a strong squad for the upcoming season, skipper Faf du Plessis highlighted that it was a busy time for him and the think tank .

With a strong nucleus already present in the top order with players like Du Plessis, Virat Kohli, Glenn Maxwell and Rajat Patidar, and having acquired services of all-rounder Cameron Green, who adds excellent depth to the batting, RCB's focussed approach in the auction saw them securing more strength in the bowling department.

West Indian aggressive paceman Alzarri Joseph (Rs11.50 Cr) became the first buy for RCB at the auction. They added more speed into their attack by picking up New Zealand's fast bowler Lockie Ferguson (Rs2 Cr) and England's Tom Curran (Rs1.50 Cr). RCB also added Indian left-arm pacer Yash Dayal (Rs5 Cr) and spin all-rounder Swapnil Singh (Rs20 lacs) to ensure variation in the bowling attack. They bought talented young wicketkeeper Saurav Chauhan (Rs20 lacs) from Gujarat to complete a 25-member squad. -ANI

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Jai Balaji Balakrishnan aged about 44 years, R/a No.383, 1st Floor, BCCHS Layout, Off Kanakapura Main Road, Near Holiday Village Resort, Bayanapalya, Vajarahalli, Thalaghattapura, Bangalore 560109. I hereby declared that SUDHA RANI C.K and SUDHA RANI CHEEMANAHALLI KRISHNA REDDY both names are belongs to my wife's name only. Vide affidavit dated 11.12.2023. Sworn before Notary : G.R. Rajanna

I Chandana R W/o Vishwas N A R/o No E 162, Nagenahalli, Yelahanka, Bengaluru-64 have changed my name Chandana R to Chandana B R for all purposes

I Irayya S/O, Nagayya Koti R/o No.403,manasa Layout,holi Child School, Kengeri Upanagara, Bangalore,-560060. have changed my name to Irayya Nagayya Koti.

I, PAVAN BINDU MADHAV aged about 40 years S/o Bindu Madhav Kulkarni, R/at L and T Raintree Boulevard Tower 7 Flat No.1202, Bellary Road Byatarayanapura Bangalore-560092, have changed my name to PAVAN KULKARNI vide affidavit dated: 20/12/2023 Before Notary S.R.Paramashivaiah Bangalore.

I, Gurulingaiah S S/o Shivalingaiah R/o Vibhuthi - kere, Kailancha, Hobli, Anjanapura, Ramanagar-562159 Have changed my name to Gurulingaiah V S vide Affidavit Dt:20/12/2023 before notary R Vishwanath B'luru.

I, Kapil Kumar Srivastava, R/o No 1904/9, 1st Flr, 7th Main, E-Block, 2nd Stage, Subramanyanagar, Rajajinagar, Bangalore-560010 have changed my daughter's name (minor) from Kangna Srivastava to Kangana Srivastava

I Rana Firdose Arif W/O, Syed Ahmed Sibghathulla Bokhari R/o # 14, 1st Main Road, Near Khb Colony. Kengeri Satellite Town. Bengaluru 560060. have changed my name to Rana Firdose.

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E220d	Polar White	Diesel	2022	7052	7000000	93000
E220d	Polar White	Diesel	2022	3677	7300000	96000
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97 Opposition MPs out, but 3 criminal bills in

Lok Sabha passes amended Bills, Telecommunications Bills by voice vote

The Lok Sabha (LS) on Tuesday passed three amended criminal bills -- Bharatiya Nyaya (Second) Sanhita, 2023; Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha (Second) Sanhita, 2023; and Bharatiya Sakshya (Second) (BSB) 2023.

The Lok Sabha also passed the Telecommunications Bill, 2023, with voice vote. The three Bills were passed after Home Minister Amit Shah spoke in the House and majority of MPs present in the Lower House voted in favour of the bills by voice vote. The proceedings took place in the absence of 97 Opposition MPs, who have been suspended over "misconduct" and "unruly" behaviour since last week. Referring to IPC, CrPc, Indian Evidence Act, Shah said: "New criminal law bills will free people from colonial mindset. The three laws were made during the time of British. Till the laws are not repealed, the UK laws will continue in the country. Her Majesty, London Gazette, British Crown and barrister terms continue to be used in India because of the laws." Shah said that the bills were framed after consultations. He said he had even gone through every comma and full stop before they were tabled in the Lok Sabha.

He said that the three bills will establish a justice system based on Indian thinking. He said the existing laws reflect the colonial mindset of punishing for a crime but not doing justice. Shah also highlighted the changes brought in the new Bills and said a provision for trial in absentia has been introduced to the criminal justice system.

"A provision for Trial in Absentia has been introduced. Many cases shook us, be it the Mumbai bomb blast or any other.

Placard used by opposition MPs during a protest over their suspension amid the Winter session of Parliament, in New Delhi, Wednesday

> **"New criminal law bills will free people from colonial mindset. The 3 laws were made during the time of British** – Amit Shah

Those people are hiding in other countries and trials are not underway.

"They don't need to come here now. If they don't appear before the court within 90 days then in their absence trial will go on. A public prosecutor will be appointed for their prosecution. They will be hanged. It will make the process to bring them back since it changes their status in the other country when they get prosecuted," he said.

He further said after the bill becomes law, the case would have to be brought to trial in 120 days. "Now the accused will get seven days to file a plea for acquittal. The judge has to hold the hearing in those seven days and in a maximum time of 120 days, the case would come to trial. There was no time limit for plea bargaining earlier. Now if one accepts their crime within 30 days of the crime then the punishment will be less," he said. He also said that there was no provision to present documents during trials. "We have made it compulsory to produce all documents within 30 days. No delays will be made in that," he said. He also underlined that for poor, the biggest challenge to get justice is the financial challenge.

The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita will replace the Indian Penal Code 1860, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita will replace the CrPC of 1973 and the Bharatiya Sakshya Bill will replace the Indian Evidence Act of 1872. **– IANS**

'Face challenges first; good if Kharge is PM candidate'

It is good if Congress President M Mallikarjun Kharge becomes the Prime Ministerial candidate of opposition bloc INDIA, but there is need to first face practical challenges ahead, instead of daydreaming, his son and Karnataka Minister Priyank Kharge said on Wednesday. He stressed on the need for the Congress and INDIA bloc parties to gain majority in Lok Sabha, calling it a major challenge before of the opposition formation.

West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday proposed Kharge's name, saying he could be the "first Dalit prime minister" of the country, but no decision was taken on it. "AICC President has clearly reacted to this, he has said that the challenge before us is to elect as many (Congress) parliamentarians as possible and send them to Delhi. It is the major challenge ahead of us. Whatever has to be done to get a majority, we will do it," Priyank Kharge said.

He told reporters, "Will you say no, if a Kannadiga becomes the Prime Minister?" "If he (Mallikarjun Kharge) becomes (PM candidate), good, but we have to first face the practical challenges ahead of us, we cannot be just daydreaming. We have to first win Congress' 200-250 seats, along with that we have to together with INDIA alliance members create a favourable atmosphere." **– PTI**

Kumaraswamy leaves for Delhi, seat-sharing talks with BJP leadership for LS polls likely

JD(S) state President HD Kumaraswamy on Wednesday left for New Delhi amid speculation that he is likely to hold talks with the BJP central leadership on seat-sharing in Karnataka for the Lok Sabha elections. The JD(S) joined the BJP-led NDA in September after a meeting Kumaraswamy, a former Chief Minister, had with Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP national president J P Nadda in New Delhi. Leaders of both parties have since been maintaining that talks are yet to take place on seat sharing for the Lok Sabha polls.

Though Kumaraswamy said he was going to Delhi on personal work, his nephew and JD(S) Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna indicated about JD(S) patriarch and former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi on Thursday.

"No seat sharing talks...is my trip to Delhi also special? There is nothing special in the Delhi trip, I'm going on personal work...there is nothing, I will come back to talk to you," Kumaraswamy told reporters at the airport, before leaving for the national capital. However, Revanna said in Delhi: "Tomorrow our elders (Deve Gowda) will be meeting the Prime Minister and will discuss issues concerning the state." According to JD(S) sources, Kumaraswamy is likely to meet the BJP leadership to take the alliance forward and discuss seat sharing for the Lok Sabha polls.

Also, as Deve Gowda, who is member of the Rajya Sabha from Karnataka, is in Delhi to attend the Parliament session, they are likely to meet Modi.

Meanwhile, state BJP President BY Vijayendra, also travelling to Delhi. Vijayendra said he was going to the national capital to attend a party meeting. "On December 22 and 23, there is a meeting of all state presidents of the party in Delhi, so I'm going to attend it. During the visit, I will try to meet all party leaders and the national president (Nadda), and try to discuss the appointment of state office-bearers of the party," he said. Asked about talks on seat sharing with the JD(S), Vijayendra said, both parties are in alliance, but there is no information about JD(S)' expectations. **– PTI**

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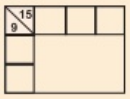
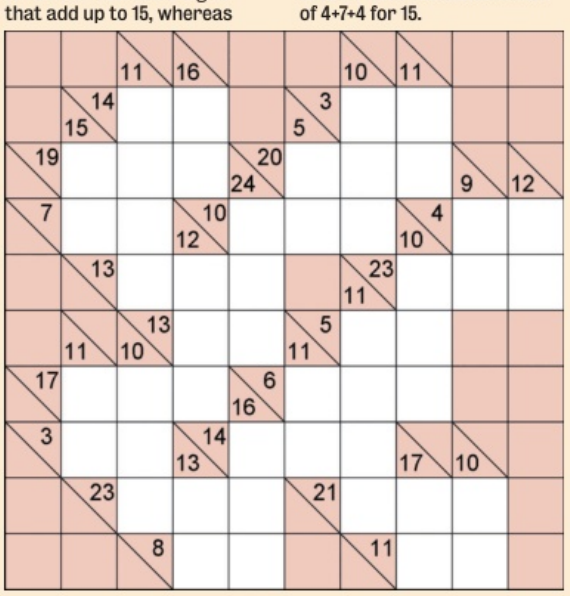
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

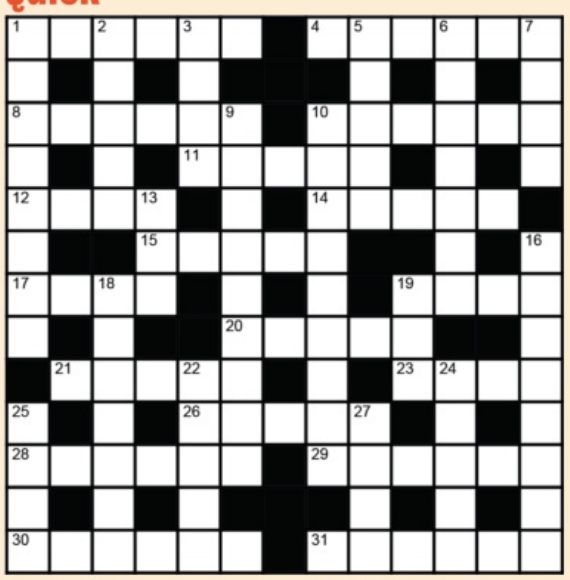


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Deny, reject or say no to (6)
4 Stage whispers (6)
8 A unit of stellar distance approximately equal to 3.25 light years (6)
10 Benevolent or compassionate (6)
11 Superlatively bad? (5)
12 Shout (4)
14 Relaxes (5)
15 Cancel and render void (5)
17 To want badly (4)
19 A in A.D. ? (4)
20 Faithful (5)
21 Military chaplain (5)
23 Indian language of yore (4)
26 Copy, edition (5)
28 Groups of three? (6)
29 Attempting or essaying (6)
30 Most rational (6)
31 Portuguese money formerly (6)

DOWN

1 Answering or responding; acknowledging (8)
2 Ferocious (5)
3 Killed (4)
5 Fry lightly in hot oil (5)
6 Was a seller of? (5,2)
7 Scottish river (4)
9 Innumerable or myriad (9)
10 Residential area located between Hosur Road and Sarjapur Road (3,6)
13 Youth (3)
16 ___ ___ an end : concluding? (6,2)
18 Joy (7)
19 High mountain (3)
22 Is conveyed on (5)
24 Farewell (5)
25 Greek letters – "seat" changed ? (4)
27 Makes mistakes (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: C EQUALS I

KNWAETOY CAT'Q QFN AOIN OA CIKEWQOTQ.

Linemaro

My doctor says I'm lacking Vitamin U.

Mindchow

Showing off is the fool's idea of glory.

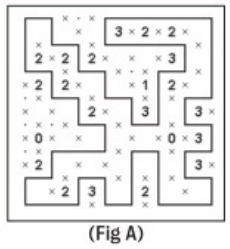
Joke of the day

What do toads drink? Croaka-cola!

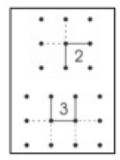
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

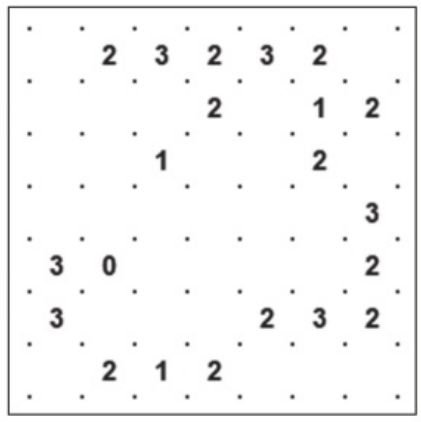


(Fig B) Not Allowed

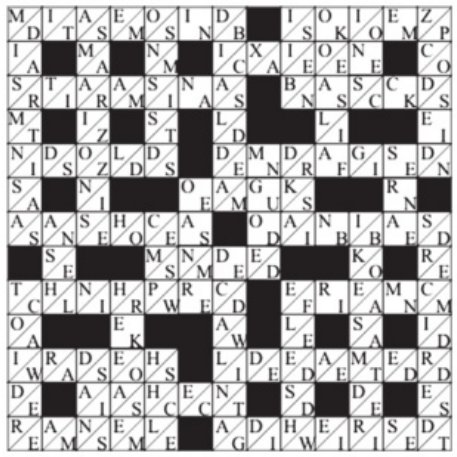
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



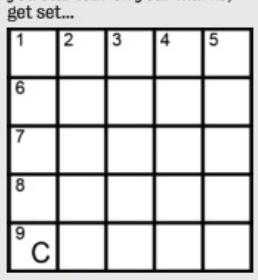
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

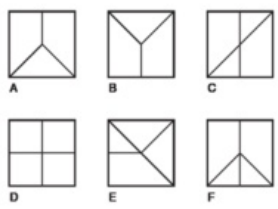
1 Dam it; 6 Weals; 7 Freed; 8 I'm Ilu; 9 Calms

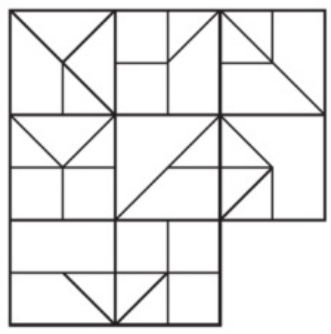
DOWN

1 Sic ad; 2 Wed LL; 3 I'm FAA; 4 I mule; 5 Mr Set

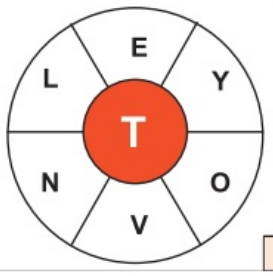
Mensapuzzle

Which is the missing tile?





Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

05 Average; 06 Good; 08 Outstanding

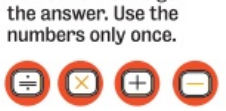
SudokuChallenge

					6	7		
3	2		9	4			5	
6		5						
9		6	1		7			4
			3		8			
8			5		4	1		2
						6		7
	3			8	5		1	9
		2	4					

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Easy = 13

3 8 9 9

Medium = 13

2 7 8 9

Hard = 8

4 7 9 6

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Leg is moved. 2. Puddle is moved. 3. Clothespin is missing. 4. Bush is missing. 5. Arm is moved. 6. Frame is added around window.

Riddler

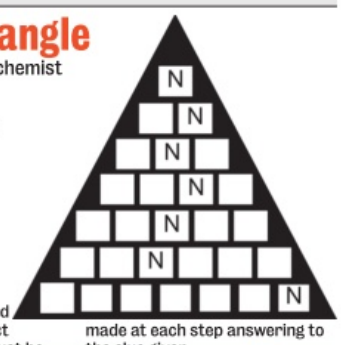
Find the two palindromes described below. (A palindrome is a word or phrase that's spelled the same backwards as forwards, such as Was it a bat I saw?)

Question asked by a person afraid of rodents: ___ ___ ___ ___

Said by an owl on a muggy day: ___ ___ ___ ___

Alpha triangle

1 Nitrogen for the chemist
2 A's alternative
3 Working insect
4 Grabs some rays
5 Yuletide visitor
6 Holy places
7 Windlass



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Redeye by Mel Casson

Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

Crankshaft

HERE'S THE VIDEO OF THE GRANDMA CATCHING MY BUS!
AND, ONCE SOMETHING IS ON THE INTERNET... IT'S THERE FOREVER!
I'VE NEVER BEEN SO GLAD THAT I'M A GHOST BEFORE!
9-29

Mutts

MOOCH, DID YOU KNOW THAT TREES COMMUNICATE WITH OTHER TREES!?!
WOW
WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY SAY?
WHEN ARE HUMANS GOING TO RELAX AND ENJOY LIFE?

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today you are blessed by the moon; messy things are now under control. Your performance may be praised by your boss, and you are likely to get new responsibilities in terms of promotion. Money that was stuck is likely to be recovered now; it may help with savings. You may hear some good news in terms of legal matters. Issues with the siblings are likely to be resolved now.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today, you may hear good news in terms of a job.
You may plan for higher studies to groom your career. You may also be busy with some motivational events. Singles may hear good news in terms of marriage. Couples may have some good news in terms of childbirth.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today, you may plan for a change in place; it is advised to postpone the decision related to migration. It is also advised to avoid investing in business. By late evening, the situation may be under control. With the help of good advice from one of the elders, you may control the messy situation.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, you may have good patience; meditation may help you increase concentration, which will speed up your project. Your subordinates may cooperate with you, which may help you complete the project on time. There may be some short trips related to work. You are likely to meet an influential person who may help you boost your business.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today, you may spend money to buy some creative or artistic artefacts to renovate your house, which may increase your social status. You may implement some new plans in your family business, and it will pay you in terms of gains in the near future. You may also be busy with family or social get-togethers.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today is a good day for you. You may have good vitality and health. You may enjoy your work. Today, this is your challenge to avoid straightforwardness. It is advised to avoid arguments on worthless topics; otherwise, there may be some disputes in the family. Job seekers may find a suitable job. Lovebirds are advised to avoid making arguments on worthless topics.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you are not blessed by the moon. You may feel unhappy, you may become impatient today, and you may find it difficult to perform your task and not be able to fulfil your desire.You want to be detached from the given responsibility. You may not be able to complete any tasks.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, you are blessed by the moon. Work-related pressure may go away.
Your earnings may be converted into profits now. You are likely to invest for a long time. You may get an overseas work order, which may give you financial benefits in the future. You may find your soul mate. Students may hear good news about their academics.

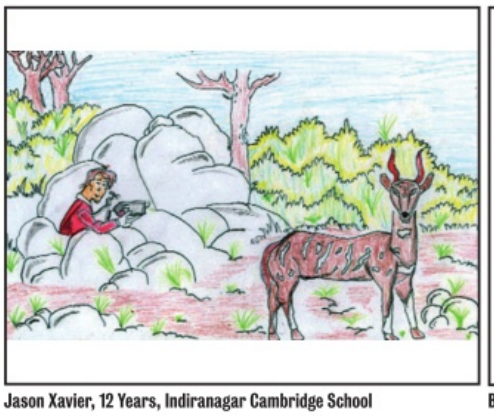
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today you are blessed by a positive moon; you may perform well in your professional front. You may implement your business plans very easily with the help of your subordinates. Intellectual investments and financial investments may start giving profits now, which may increase confidence levels. You may use your wisdom to gain benefits.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, you are blessed by the moon. Your spiritual power may make you happy. Your way of thinking may be positive. You are inclined towards spiritualism today. You may plan to visit a religious place. You may also take an interest in occult science. You are likely to observe flawlessness in your nature. It is advised to keep your views to yourself; try to discuss them with those who may understand your feelings; otherwise, you may be a victim of a conspiracy.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today, you may feel dull, you may lack patience, and you may be attracted to the occult. It is advised to follow your intuition before making an important decision. With the help of meditation and chanting mantras, you may gain in-depth knowledge on a subject and focus on it.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today you are blessed by the moon, which may help you improve your inner strength. You are likely to get some new opportunities for your business and work, which will pay you in terms of gains in the near future. Couples may hear good news in terms of childbirth. Lovebirds are advised to be clear in their views of each other to maintain harmony in the relationship.

KIDZONE



Jason Xavier, 12 Years, Indiranagar Cambridge School

B Samhitha Naidu, 10 Years, New Cambridge English School

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
= √(-25) x √(-64)/(41)^1/3
= (√25√-1 x √64√-1) / (41)^1/3
= 5×8(√-1)^2/(41)^1/3
= -1 × 5×8/41 = -1×5×4 = -20

BULL'S EYE
lent, note, NOVELTY, tone, vent, veto, volt, vote

RIDDLER
"Was it a rat I saw?" and "Too hot to hoot"

FAST FIVE

A	D	M	I	T
S	W	A	L	E
D	E	F	E	R
I	L	I	U	M
C	L	A	M	S

STRIKE OUT

R	A	N	E	E	■	A	D	H	E	R	E	D	■	■
E	■	A	■	E	S	■	E	■	E	■	■	E	■	■
W	A	D	E	S	■	I	D	E	A	T	E	D	■	■
O	■	E	■	W	■	L	■	S	■	I	■	■	■	■
C	H	I	R	P	E	D	■	F	R	A	N	C	■	■
S	■	S	■	S	N	E	E	■	O	■	E	■	■	■
S	A	S	H	E	S	■	D	A	B	B	E	D	■	■
S	■	E	■	M	U	S	■	R	■	■	■	■	■	■
I	D	O	L	S	■	E	N	R	A	G	E	D	■	■
M	Z	T	■	D	■	L	■	E	■	■	■	■	■	■
S	T	A	M	I	N	A	■	B	A	C	K	S	■	■
I	M	M	■	I	X	I	O	N	■	O	■	■	■	■
P	A	R	S	E	C	■	H	U	M	A	N	E	■	■
E	■	E	■	L	■	■	■	A	■	E	■	P	■	■
L	A	W	O	R	S	T	■	L	■	T	■	Y	■	■
Y	E	L	L	■	U	■	R	E	S	T	S	■	■	■
I	■	A	N	N	U	L	■	I	■	■	■	C	■	■
N	E	E	D	■	T	■	A	■	A	N	N	O	■	■
G	■	L	■	L	O	V	A	L	■	■	■	M	■	■
P	A	D	R	E	■	O	■	P	A	L	I	■	■	■
E	■	T	■	I	S	S	U	E	■	D	■	N	■	■
T	R	I	A	D	S	■	T	R	Y	I	N	G	■	■
A	■	O	■	E	■	R	■	E	■	T	■	■	■	■
S	A	N	E	S	T	■	E	S	C	U	D	O	■	■

QUICK

R	E	F	U	S	E	■	A	S	I	D	E	S	■	■
E	■	E	■	L	■	■	■	A	■	E	■	P	■	■
P	A	R	S	E	C	■	H	U	M	A	N	E	■	■
A	■	O	■	E	■	R	■	E	■	T	■	■	■	■
S	A	N	E	S	T	■	E	S	C	U	D	O	■	■

MENSA PUZZLE
F: looking across and down, lines are carried forward from the first two squares to the final square, except where two lines appear in the same position in the first two squares, in which case they are cancelled out

Personal isn't the same as important.

QUOTE UNCODE

4	1	9	8	5	6	7	2	3
3	2	7	9	4	1	8	5	6
6	8	5	7	3	2	4	9	1
9	5	6	1	2	7	3	8	4
2	4	1	3	6	8	9	7	5
8	7	3	5	9	4	1	6	2
5	9	8	2	1	3	6	4	7
7	3	4	6	8	5	2	1	9
1	6	2	4	7	9	5	3	8

SUDOKU

ALPHA TRIANGLE
N, An, Ant, Tans, Santa, Santa, Captain.

GO FIGURE
Easy
9 – 8 + 3 + 9 = 13
Medium
7 x 2 – 9 + 8 = 13
Hard
4 – 9 + 7 + 6 = 8

LOOP

KAKURO

Volume No 16, Issue No 128 RNI NO:KARENG/2007/21142 Published for the Proprietors, Metropolitan Media Company Ltd by R.J. Prakashan at No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011 and printed by him at Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., The Times of India Press, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, KIADB Bommasandra Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore - 560 099 (Phones : Press : 080-22899999; Editorial : 080-40877666, Fax – 40877545, Registered Office: No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru - 560 011, Email : mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com Editor : Ms. Seena Menon - responsible for selection of news under PRB Act. © Reproduction in whole or in part without the written permission of the Publisher is prohibited.

 # Shreyas out of hospital
Actor Shreyas Talpade has been discharged from the hospital after he suffered a heart attack

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PLEA TO COURT

Jacqueline: Restrain Sukesh Chandrashekhar from issuing statements

Bollywood Actor Jacqueline Fernandez on Wednesday moved Delhi's Patiala House Court and sought direction from the Economic Offence Wing of Delhi Police and Superintendent of Mandoli Jail, where conman Sukesh Chandrashekhar is in judicial custody, to immediately restrain him from issuing any further letters, messages, or statements addressed to her directly or indirectly.

Jacqueline in her plea alleged that Chandrashekhar persistently engages in the unsolicited dissemination of troubling letters to numerous electronic and print media platforms. These letters, once published by the media outlets, create an alarming and distressing environment for her, the actor said. Their widespread publication amplifies the intimidation, profoundly affecting the applicant's safety and well-being.

Jacqueline is a protected witness in the FIR being investigated by the Economic Offence Wing (EOW) of Delhi Police in connection with the Rs 200 crore money-laundering and extortion case linked to alleged conman Sukesh Chandrashekhar

EOW in its reply supports Jacqueline Fernandez's application and stated that "It has been observed that the accused Sukash Chandershekhar has also been in the habit of sending letters, concerning the present applicant, to media platforms, through various means, which is not only harassing/ threatening the present applicant directly but also affecting her social/ professional assignments."

Thus, such an aggravating nature of the threat/ harassment to the victim/applicant is a matter of grave concern for the investigating agency that an important witness of the case is being coerced/ harassed/ threatened by the accused, as it will have serious implications on the conduct of the trial of the case, concerning the present applicant/ witness, stated EOW.

Jacqueline in her plea stated that she has no previous interaction with the accused... **—ANI**

Vision in white

On Wednesday, Janhvi Kapoor grabbed attention as she stepped out in a white ethnic attire. The actress was seen donning an ethereal white ethnic wear which was perfectly paired with her beauty. In the viral video, Janhvi can be seen coming out of her car wearing a white colour kurta paired with the same colour pants and dupatta. She flaunted her flawless skin with the no-makeup face.

Before entering at the airport gate, she smiled and posed for the paparazzi.

On the work front, Janhvi Kapoor will soon be featured in 'Devara', a pan-India film which features Jr NTR, Saif Ali Khan, and Prakash Raj in the film, which is directed by Koratala Siva. Famous composer Anirudh Ravichander is composing the film's music. 'Devara' is set to be released in theatres on April 5, 2024.

—ETimes

DEEPFAKE: SUSPECTS QUESTIONED

Rashmika Mandanna's deepfake video controversy continues to make headlines. According to latest reports, the Delhi Police recently questioned four people who are suspected to be the uploaders of the actress' deepfake video.

Reports claim that the information regarding three of these suspects was provided by META. The interrogation also indicates that the deepfake videos featuring the actress were likely uploaded using a fake identity, and the use of a Virtual Private Network (VPN).

Reports further stated that since these suspects were not 'creators' but 'uploaders' of the deepfake video, they have been let off. And police officials are likely to question more individuals in the coming days.

To give some background, Rashmika Mandanna's deepfake video went viral last month on the internet and started a much-needed discussion on Artificial Intelligence and its potential consequences in the future. **—ETimes**

WHAT FLORENCE LOVES ABOUT BEDROOM SCENES

Actress Florence Pugh, who has had intimate clinches on camera with Harry Styles and Cillian Murphy, has shared what she loves the most about the bedroom scenes.

Apparently, it doesn't include getting comfortable with a co-star or practising the lines or the scene but it's all about a good nap for her when the crew around her is preparing the scene, reports 'Mirror.co.uk'.

The Oscar nominated star, who plays Harry's wife in 'Don't Worry Darling' and has a raunchy scene with Cillian Murphy in 'Oppenheimer', said that she adores having a nap while lighting and camera technicians tinker around her. She said, "I love a crew because I love lots of people around. I actually will sleep best in a room full of people that are setting up for the next shot. I could go back to my trailer and have a 10-minute kip."

She further mentioned, quoted by 'Mirror.co.uk', "I love bed scenes... because you need to lie in the bed as they set up and see what you're going to do in the bed. Then they say, 'Florence, do you want to go back to your trailer?'. I always say 'no', and I stay there like a good little bean, because then they don't need anyone to come in and help light. I just lie there and I have a full-on kip. And that's when I sleep my best, because everybody's just pottering about." It sometimes helps her portray a realistic awakening, as she did in the movie 'Lady Macbeth'. **—IANS**

SANDALWOOD SHOTS

Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Real acting

Here is a unique movie about pregnancy in which a mother-to-be played the lead role. The main character in the film Tharini is played by Mamatha Rahuth, who was six months pregnant when the shoot began and now she is the proud mother of a baby boy.

Tharini was screened at Ayodhya International Film Festival and won the best social impact award. The movie is directed by Siddu Poornachandra and bankrolled by Suresh Kotian Chittpur under the Sri Gajani Productions banner. "The movie showcases how sex-determination and female foeticide is happening in the state. It conveys the much-needed message to society on the importance of baby girls. The shooting of the movie was held in and around Bengaluru. Mamatha plays the pregnant woman. She was very comfortable during the shooting," said Siddu.

The director said that he is confident of the success of the movie at the box office and the positive impact on the audiences.

Mother & daughter

Abhinaya, the heroine of yesteryears, is back in movies after a long gap. Abhinaya plays the mother in the film Crush that revolves around a mother and daughter. The movie is directed by Abhi N and bankrolled by S Chandramohan. The film is scheduled for release in February.

"It is my maiden movie as a director. I approached producer S Chandramohan with a pan-India script. I told him to arrange Rs 10 crore to make the movie but the producer told me to come with a script that does not need Rs 10 crore. Finally, he agreed to bankroll this movie. Navarasa Nayaka Jaggesh is my inspiration to write the script," said director Abhi.

Thanking Abhinaya for agreeing to act in the movie, the director he felt very happy when Abhinaya gave a green signal. "I am grateful to Abhinaya madam for her cooperation," he said.

Appreciating the hard work of the director, Abhinaya said Abhi is adept in extracting great performances from the actors. Panchi S, who acted in Kannada movie Rangibirangi that was released in 2018, plays the lead while Prathibha Soppimath is paired opposite him. The movie has five songs.